

Medical Officers Annual Report for the Year 1946. .

The Minister of Health has directed that the Report for 1946 shall again be abbreviated and confined to information concerning essential and exceptional matters. Statistics are to be preserved but not included in the report. The Minister desires it to include remarks on the progress of diphtheria immunisation, the steps taken to combat infestation and certain particulars regarding the water supplies. .

General Health Statistics. .

These indicate that the health of the population remained good during 1946. No unusual epidemics occurred. The only point worth noting is the large number of births registered. This was 81, giving a birth rate of 24.0 per 1000 of population, the corresponding rate for England and Wales being 19. 1. The death rate was also high, being 16.6 as compared with the national rate of 11. 5. The disease of old age accounted for the large majority of the deaths. .

Immunisation against diphtheria. .

It is estimated that at the end of 1946 48% of the child population aged 0 to 5 were immunised, and 82% of those aged 5 to 15. The figure for the infant group is considerably less than that estimated at the end of 1945. This may be partly due to a change in the basis of calculation, but it is a fact that the response of parents to the immunisation campaign is not so good as it might be and not so good as it is in the surrounding Rural District. .

The duty of organising the immunisation of the infant group was taken over by the County Council during the year. Immunisation of the 5 to 15 group still remains the responsibility of the Local Council, but so few children of this age remain to be done that a separate organisation is redundant and actually the immunisation of both groups is carried out by the same agency. .

Infestation. .

The verminous conditions which require treatment chiefly affect School Children and the responsibility for providing treatment for them now rests with the Education Authority..

This Council now has no means of providing such treatment. .

Water Supplies. .

The whole Town has a piped supply which is excellent both in quality and quantity. Its source is a chalk well which yields a very pure if rather hard water. Regular chlorination affords additional security. .

Bacteriological examination of the water going into supply is made monthly, and chemical analysis quarterly. The results were uniformly good. .

Though every house in the Town has water within easy reach many of the older dwellings have no internal supply and depend on standpipes. .

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Medical Officer of Health. .

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